

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 12, 2015

TO: Food Service Managers, Directors, Business Managers and Superintendents

FROM: Laurie M Colgan, Director, Child Nutrition Programs

SUBJECT: Food Service Equipment Grant Funding Available

Child Nutrition Programs is pleased to announce the availability of funds for school food service program equipment. This year schools have the opportunity to request equipment fund assistance from two different sources. The individual applications outline the eligibility criteria and are attached to this memo.

### State Equipment Grant Funds

First, the **State Equipment Grant** funds are anticipated to be available again this year with the passage of the 2016 Agency of Education budget. Grants to schools are available on a competitive basis for *matching* funds up to \$3,500 per school to purchase a single unit of kitchen equipment, meal counting and claiming software or for the implementation of new Lunch or Breakfast Programs or major construction of a kitchen facility. These grants require the school to match the funds requested. The grant may be used for equipment valued over \$200 and purchased after the approval of the grant (it does not cover equipment already purchased), and the complete claim documents must be submitted to the State Agency by March 15, 2016. The application for these grant funds is attached and are due in our office not later than April 4, 2015. Schools will be notified of awards in early May. Applications are evaluated based on the quality and thoroughness of the application, the school's demonstrated case for the equipment need, the impact of the equipment on the food service program, the product research completed and bidding process, and the school's ability to match the grant funds. Schools that received funds last year are not eligible to apply.

### NSLP Federal Equipment Assistance Grants

Secondly, the 2014 Agriculture Appropriations Act provided a one-time appropriation for equipment assistance to school food authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis to SFAs for schools in which at least 50 percent of the students are free and reduced price eligible and a high level of need can be clearly demonstrated. Schools that received funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 are not eligible to apply.

One general criterion for the use of the **NSLP Federal Equipment Assistance Funds** is that they must be used to purchase equipment that improves the quality of school meals. The funds will allow SFAs to purchase equipment to serve healthier school meals that meet the updated meal

patterns, with emphasis on more fruits and vegetables in school meals, improve food safety and expand access to students. The **Federal Equipment Grant Application** is due March 16<sup>th</sup> and the equipment must be purchased, claim submitted and the grant process must be completed prior to September 30, 2015.

The applications for the two equipment grant sources are attached. Please note that submission deadlines are different. Please feel free to contact me at [laurie.colgan@state.vt.us](mailto:laurie.colgan@state.vt.us) or 479-1187 if you have any questions.